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CHINA'S RIGHTS AT THE PEACE TABLE

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If China manages to have righted all the wrongs wrought on her only within the limited period of the World War she may be satisfied. It is impossible to get a true perspective of conditions in the Far East, if the eye looks merely on conditions in Europe or America. Observation true to the facts must be all-around and, as far as possible, free from the bewilderment of passion. It is only natural to have misconception of the doings and inter-relations of the Chinese on the one side and of all other peoples, Western or Japanese, on the other, if there is already a preconception, either for or against some particular people, as shaped by bias incident to warfare in Europe. Prejudice directed against Japan may lead one to overlook all the misdeeds of the United States and her Allies as perpetrated, somewhat under cover, in Far Cathay. To understand the situation, to appreciate the wrongs done to China, and by whom, as well as to realize who are responsible for seeing that these wrongs be righted at the Peace Table, it is all important that these and all other predilections—the pro and anti-spirit—be shaken off, leaving the mind in the innocence of unruffled judiciousness.

Another preliminary to a correct study of this serious problem is to appreciate that just as all aliens residing in the United States should in times of emergency place America's interests first, or return to the land from whence they came, so all foreigners in China should place first, not the interests of their own country, but the interests of China, or, under the behests of a constraining patriotism, return to their native land, at least till the interests of all shall work injury to none. Missionaries and educationists in China ought especially to be subject to such a rule;

otherwise their mission will be looked upon as political, to denationalize those whom they profess to aim to bless.

If the reader, then, feels like casting blame on what we are about to write, let him blame the facts, not the writer.

First, we deal with concrete facts, then with some of the abstract principles, made conspicuous by President Wilson, and finally with the results as determined at the Peace Conference.

The first series of facts relates to the bringing of the war into China, and next the bringing of China into the war. In both cases, Japan has been soundly berated for making great gains at China's expense; but in the one case Great Britain should be censured for initiating the trouble for China, and in the other case the United States. This line of reasoning directly conflicts with the usual habits of placing all the blame for China's misfortunes on Japan.

WAR BROUGHT INTO CHINA

As soon as war arose in Europe, the Chinese government set to work in real earnestness to ward off dangers from the war, to maintain strict neutrality, and to defend China's neutral rights. Request was made of the Japanese government to cooperate in the same neutral policy and so preserve the peace of the Far East. The German government also gave a despatch to Japan that if Japan remained neutral, German ships would not attack British shipping in China seas. Moreover, to remove all excuse that the port of Tsingtao was a German naval base, the German squadron left for the southern Pacific and was finally destroyed at the south end of South America. The Germans made no attack on any colony of Russia, France or Great Britain or on any territory leased to them by China, in all the Far East. Contrary to the previous wish expressed by Sir Edward Grey, that the war be circumscribed to the narrowest limits, the war was quickly extended into all the continents of the world. China, too, was to become entangled. The initial wrong, culminating in many other wrongs and vast catastrophes

to China, was not done by Japan. To ignore this fact is to be unjust to Japan, and to be false to the truth.

The British government, contrary to the wish of China, made request of Japan, or, as the London *Times* said, "appealed" to Japan, to attack the German-leased territory of Kiaochow, with its port of Tsingtao, on the southern side of the province of Shantung. Japan turned away from China's request and complied as a faithful Ally with the request of Great Britain. The Japanese government first issued an ultimatum to Germany to surrender and to hand over Tsingtao to Japan to be in turn handed over to China. The ultimatum was ignored, and the Japanese, aided by a few British troops, proceeded to attack Tsingtao, destroy its forts, and take prisoners its defenders. As the ultimatum was not accepted, some Japanese claim that there is no duty on Japan's part to return Kiaochow to China.

Japan, however, worked injury to China in trying to subjugate these few Germans. As if the great Japanese army and navy were powerless to effect the victory, by attacking from the sea, they made it a matter of "military necessity" to violate China's neutral rights and so the rules of international law, in two particulars. Japanese transports entered a Chinese port on the north side of Shantung promontory, 180 kilometers away, a port that was not a treaty port at all, still less leased to Germany, and in the face of China's protests landed the troops and guns on Chinese soil. In the face of further protests, and in clear violation of the Hague Convention, Japanese troops and guns were taken across the neutral territory of China to attack Tsingtao from the rear or landward side, marching as great a distance through neutral territory as German troops marched across Belgium to reach Paris.

What is wrong in Europe is wrong in Asia; Right is Right the world around. Japan made a "scrap of paper" of the Hague Convention.

In accordance with this same Hague Convention, China could have resisted by force of arms, as Belgium resisted German troops, but this would have placed China on the

side of Germany, against the combined forces of Japan, Great Britain, France and Russia. China would have suffered worse than in her weak, negative and neutral position.

Having captured Tsingtao, Japanese troops, under some other kind of "military necessity," proceeded to march westward to the provincial capital of Tsinan, a distance equal to the length of Belgium from east to west, and to take over as Japanese personal property all the railway and mining concessions granted to Germans by the Chinese government on Chinese territory—concessions financed by German money. Where before in international law is it prescribed that where one nation is at war with another nation, it can go into a third and neutral nation and seize all the property of that other and belligerent nation? For Japan to act thus was to make herself, and not China, sovereign in China; the wrong done to China was greater than that done to Germany.

Britons were glad to see German trade and influence in China removed as a menace; but they were less satisfied to see the advantages which had been won by Germany, transferred to Japan, a new and rising rival. As to what might happen to China neither Britons nor Japanese had any care.

These wrongs done to China were intensified very soon by Twenty-one Demands presented by Japan, with injunction to complete secrecy. When the Chinese government delayed in the acceptance, an ultimatum was presented, not this time to Germany but to China. China, seeing the futility of relying on right or reason, yielded to stronger military force. Agreements were made and signed—signed on the Chinese part by the chief delegate to the Peace Conference. These agreements related to special rights and prior position for Japan in Shantung, in inner Mongolia, in southern Manchuria, in the Yangtze Valley (known as British sphere of interest), and in Fukien. Certain matters affecting China's sovereignty were postponed for future negotiation.

To put the issue clearly before the mind, will Great Britain, having instigated Japan to bring the war into China, now see to it that the wrongs done to China by this act shall in some way be righted? Will Great Britain for the sake of the cause of Righteousness, befriend China and possibly offend Japan? Or shall China be placed in bondage as a result of a war, begun in Europe, and thrust into the midst of the four hundred millions of China?

CHINA BROUGHT INTO THE WAR

If China's entry into the war was to have any effect on the distinctive military operations of the war in Europe, other than commercial rivalries, then it was right to have put forth effort to persuade China to abandon neutrality and become one of the belligerents. If, moreover, China could only get her wrongs righted by being present at the peace table, and if she could be present at the peace table only by joining the war on the Allied side, then it was wise for her to yield to outside persuasion. Should the presence of Chinese delegates in Paris be without effect, it would have been better for her to have remained neutral and to be at peace in her own borders and with all peoples. By going into the war, the wrongs done her were augmented, and with the wrongs dire catastrophe.

The war issue was thrust into Chinese politics primarily by an innocent suggestion of the American President in February, 1917, that China as well as all other neutral nations imitate the example of the United States in severing diplomatic relations with the German Imperial Government. If this suggestion or request had been simply communicated to China in the regular way without any pressure, no harm would have been done. China would have remained neutral and at peace. Moreover, no further advantage would have accrued to Japan at China's expense. However, for some reason or other best known to the parties concerned, a crusade, a propaganda, under American finesse was begun to embroil China against Germany, in the eventuality of war between

Germany and the United States. The American agitation in Peking was termed by Samuel G. Blythe in the *Saturday Evening Post* a "flying wedge." By strenuous effort and plenty of secret diplomacy, the wedge, thus thrust into China, separated the president of China and his adherents of neutrality from the premier and his adherents of war. Most of parliament sided with the premier. What was clear, another cause of friction had arisen. And this was the first harm done.

The great argument presented to the Chinese was that by closer alliance of the two republics it would be possible to checkmate the aggressions of Japan. Hitherto Japan for her own interests had advised China against going into the war, but now, on scenting the American argument, she turned round, rushed in ahead of America and became the most urgent and active of all in favor of declaring war as well as of severing diplomatic relations. At the same time, the Entente Allies made secret agreements with Japan to allow China to go into the war. Japan has remained at the head, the paramount factor in China's international relations. This is the second harm done to China.

While at first it was Young China who saw the force of American argument, later it was the party of militarists and conservatism—military autocracy—that insisted on participation in the World War. As this party favored war, it had the support and recognition of the nations arrayed against Germany. Hence the nations which were fighting for democracy in Europe and the overthrow of military autocracy, were turning against democracy in China and favoring that which they condemned in Europe. This was the third harm done to China.

The president, Li Luan-hung, who wanted the war question kept away from China, was devoted to the ideas of democracy. He had the whole country back of him in building up a real republic. He had eight months only to put the republic to the test. If the war issue and its complications had not arisen, President Li would doubtless have succeeded in making the republic a success.

Hindrance to this achievement was the fourth harm done to China.

A clash came between the reactionary, autocratic militarists and the party of democracy, progress and constitutionalism. The result was civil war or the fourth revolution. This was the fifth harm done to China.

Japan by gaining the predominance succeeded in making in 1917 and 1918 a large number of Agreements or contracts with the military party in China, whereby valuable concessions were given to Japan, while China became burdened with financial obligations to Japan. Most of this work was done in secret. This was the sixth harm done to China.

When it was found that China did but little to help the Allies in the war, and still more failed to wage a commercial war on Germany, as Great Britain desired, then about the time of the armistice the Allied ministers along with the Americans presented China with a complaint of remissness on twelve particulars. Later, under more pressure, the new President of China some time after the armistice, issued a Mandate calling for the repatriation to Germany and Austria-Hungary of enemy aliens in China and the seizure of German property five or six months after this same armistice. This was new international law being taught to the Oriental. This was the seventh harm done to China.

China by entering the war has been compelled to take orders from a combination of seven fighting nations, sometimes one, sometimes another and sometimes all. China has lost her power of independent action. This is the eighth and the greatest harm done to China.

As another harm, which may be traced back to the war issue through precedence granted to Japan, may be cited the Lansing-Ishii exchange of Notes (needing no ratification by the Senate), whereby Japan is recognized as having special interests in China—an arrangement made unbeknown to China. As between the United States and Japan in China, Japan may be prior; but as between China and Japan, China has special and prior interests in China as Japan has in Japan.

Of the four presidents of China, President Sun Yat-sen strongly opposed the war, President Yuan Shih-kai resisted the frequent requests of his friend, Sir John Jordan, to join the Entente (all before America had come into the war), President Li Yuan-hung preferred neutrality with equal friendship to all, while President Feng Kno-chang, the one who actually declared war (with no joint action of people or parliament), insisted that China was not joining the Allies but was waging war independently!

The question, then, to be put clearly before the mind is this: Will the United States, for initiating the war issue in China and for giving Japan added opportunities, now see to it that the wrongs done to China shall in some way be righted? Will the United States, for the sake of the cause of Righteousness, befriend China and possibly offend Japan?

Before the war there was a fairly safe balance of power in China. In general, Russia, France and Belgium worked together, and Great Britain and Germany worked together. So far as the United States and Japan took part, it was more apt to be with Great Britain and Germany than with Russia, France and Belgium. The big Powers (excepting the United States) had each a sphere of influence, the greatest being that of the British. Each power was able to secure from China concessions for railways and mines within its own sphere, but with an "open door" policy as to trade in all parts of China. No one of these great Powers was willing to see China dismembered, and thus be limited to its own special sphere of influence. Now this balance has been unbalanced, and the "open door" policy has been cast aside so far as the two Central Powers are concerned. A plan is in full operation for destroying Germany as a commercial competitor in China, but, in doing so, it places all the German interests and privileges in the hands of the Japanese, who already are a strong commercial rival.

Having dealt with concrete facts and their interpretation, we may now apply a few of the abstract principles announced to all peoples by President Wilson.

In his "fourteen points" speech he said:

What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression.

All that is needed is to insist that the spirit of these words be applied unreservedly to the sovereign status of China. If Japan and her Allies have in the past been guilty of "force and selfish aggression" in their treatment of China, all that is needed is for the United States to insist that these nations be truly penitent, as befits a League of Nations, and spontaneously recompense China for wrong done her in days gone by.

Another wise remark, showing that President Wilson is a sound student of history, is the following:

Special alliance and economic rivalries and hostilities have been the prolific source in the modern world of the plans and passions that produce war. It would be an insincere as well as insecure peace that did not exclude them in definite and binding terms.

Nothing more apparent. Shall the principle be applied to the inter-relations of foreign nations in China?

We now come to the most important of all in the discussion, namely, the outcome as determined at the Peace Conference.

The Chinese, having gone into the war in order that China might represent herself, and not be represented by Japan, at the Peace Conference, will be sadly disappointed if as a result their wishes are cast aside for the sake of expediency, and Japan's position in China is stronger than ever by being confirmed by the Peace Conference. Moreover by being encouraged to appeal to the United States and Great Britain as against Japan it would be humiliating if the only result should be that the Chinese incur the resentment of the Japanese.

For some reason, the Chinese have laid no stress on Japan's violation of international law when the Japanese

seized by conquest all the German rights in Shantung as well as in the mode of attack on Tsingtao. If this Peace Conference is to be based on Righteousness, then the Chinese should have strongly protested against all violations of law by whomsoever perpetrated.

The Chinese have presented as their chief desire, that Kiaochow, including Tsingtao, be taken away from Germany and restored to China. The Japanese have expressed a willingness to do so, on "conditions." These conditions had been agreed to by China in the Agreement made in 1915 subsequent to the twenty-one demands and the ultimatum. They consisted in allowing Japan a concession in the best part of Tsingtao to be under Japanese jurisdiction, and in granting to all others an International Settlement. This would make Tsingtao a second Shanghai. Not much would be left to China for her to administer and control.

The Japanese are now satisfied when the Peace Conference confirms Japan in its position and claims with respect to Kiaochow. The treaty states that Germany's rights are terminated and that Kiaochow and all German rights are to pass over to Japan. It is not even stated that Japan will restore Kiaochow to China. A man from Mars, reading the treaty, would not suppose there is any China, or, at least, that Kiaochow has been a part of Chinese territory.

The argument advanced by the Chinese seems to have been that the Agreement signed in 1915 was "under duress." Whether so or not, it was for the Peace Conference to have insisted that this treaty of peace was to recognize only Right, and not the "right of conquest." Kiaochow has never ceased to be Chinese territory. It was never a German colony; it was only leased to Germany, and it must be acknowledged that the Germans made a beautiful port of the Bay of Kiaochow. If self-determination is to mean anything, it means that Chinese territory is not to be seized by Japan without China's free consent, and, particularly, that the Chinese people living in Kiaochow shall determine for themselves whether they prefer to remain Chinese or come under Japanese rule.

The trouble with the new peace treaty at this point is not so much that the poorest portion of Tsingtao may not be restored to China by Japan, with due formalities, but that Japan is confirmed in her claim that her wishes and not those of China are to be respected and that the right of conquest still rules.

Even more important is the disposal of all German railway and mining concessionary rights in Shantung. As China has been the other contracting party, it would seem as if the German rights should pass into Chinese hands, should it be necessary for Germany to relinquish them.

But Japan says "No," and the peace conferees again confirm Japan in her claim. Valuable property for the Japanese to get a hold of, "without charges!" Though the Japanese in 1914 forcibly took possession of these rights on Chinese territory, contrary to all law or justice, yet now the Peace conferees confirm Japan in this act or right of conquest. Japan originally seized this property, not on German or Japanese territory, but on Chinese territory, and, that, too, when China was a neutral nation.

The Japanese excuse their action by saying that in 1915 a treaty was made by Japan and China in which the final disposal was to be left to Japan and Germany to determine, and in which China was to have no part. The Chinese now claim that the treaty of 1915 was signed "under duress." The Paris peace treaty confirms Japan in possession of these concessionary rights granted to Germany by China. The treaty practically confirms the law that one nation at war with another can not only seize property of enemy subjects, but can do it in a third and neutral nation, as China was at the time of occupation in 1914-1915.

Greater than Japanese possession of these valuable concessions, is the recognition accorded to Japan by the Big Three and the treaty of peace at Paris. China, on the other hand, is slighted, ignored, deserted.

In a word, the peace treaty and the Covenant of the League of Nations tacitly confirm Japan in her position

of paramountcy in China. This is in addition to such confirmation in the Lansing-Ishii agreement.

Such being the case, it appears that the better policy of the Chinese delegates would have been to curry favor with Japan and form an alliance for mutual defense than to curry favor with Anglo-Americans, who, as Mr. C. T. Wang has said, "left China in the lurch."

Other parts of the treaty of peace stipulate for a few blessings to China, outside of the prevalent policy of right of conquest.

The astronomical instruments seized by Germany in 1900 are to be restored to China. It may be borne in mind that a few years ago the German government made an offer to the same effect. It is well to have it done now, as showing that the peace conference has done something for China.

The new treaty of peace also stipulates that the Chinese need not pay any more Boxer indemnity to Germany. What the Chinese have asked for, one of the desiderata, is that the Boxer indemnities due to all countries be relinquished. All that can be expected is that the allied and associated governments now agree that Germany must comply with China's wishes.

It is also stated by Baron Makino that Japan restores to China, in return for economic rights to go to Japan, "complete sovereignty in Shantung." It was never known before that Chinese sovereignty in Shantung had ceased or that it had been claimed by Japan. Japan merely pretends to give to Chinese that which was already China's and not Japan's.

On the mere matter of justice, as comprehended by ordinary minds, and so by 400,000,000 of Chinese, it looks as if it had no place in the decisions reached at the Peace Conference concerning China, one of the Allies arrayed against Germany.

All in all, the Great War has worked havoc to China, and the agents have been those of our own household, and not those who are barbaric and conquered.